Amendments to the Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A torque limiting tool comprising:

an inner handle comprising a tool coupling portion and at least one radially oriented slot;

at least one interface member located in the radially oriented slot, the interface member comprising an elongated surface generally oriented along a longitudinal axis of the inner handle;

a coil spring compressively interposed between a retainer and a biasing member ~~biasing assembly~~ located in a biasing assembly aperture and oriented along the longitudinal axis to provide ~~that provides~~ a longitudinal biasing force that biases ~~to bias~~ the interface member radially outward; and

an outer handle having an outer surface oriented along the longitudinal axis adapted to be gripped by a user and an inner surface limiting radial displacement of the interface member, the elongated surface on the interface member in direct contact with ~~and~~ the inner surface of the outer handle comprising an elongated surface area of engagement at least about 0.5 inches long and generally oriented along the longitudinal axis of the inner handle, one or more of the inner handle, the outer handle and the interface member comprising a polymeric material.

2. (Original) The tool of claim 1 wherein the tool coupling portion comprises a tool receiving aperture extending along the longitudinal axis of the inner handle.

3. (Original) The tool of claim 1 wherein the tool coupling portion comprises an outer surface of the inner handle.

4. (Original) The tool of claim 1 comprising a plurality of tools each adapted to releasably engage with the tool coupling portion.

5. (Original) The tool of claim 1 wherein the biasing assembly aperture is connected to the radially oriented slot.

6. (Original) The tool of claim 1 wherein a proximal end of the biasing assembly aperture comprises a threaded portion.

7. (Original) The tool of claim 1 wherein the radially oriented slots comprise at least one angled surface.

8. (Original) The tool of claim 1 wherein the interface member comprises at least one surface oriented toward the biasing assembly aperture at an acute angle with respect to the longitudinal axis.

9. (Original) The tool of claim 1 wherein the elongated surface of the interface member is generally flush with an outer surface of the inner handle when the longitudinal biasing force is removed.

10. (Original) The tool of claim 1 wherein the biasing force displaces the elongated surface of the interface member above an outer surface of the inner handle.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Original) The tool of claim 1 wherein the elongated surface is about 1.0 inch long.

13. (Original) The tool of claim 1 wherein the elongated surface comprises a curvilinear shape.

14. (Original) The tool of claim 1 wherein the elongated surface comprises a planar portion.

15. (Original) The tool of claim 1 wherein the biasing assembly comprises a spring.

16. (Original) The tool of claim 1 wherein the longitudinal biasing force is adjustable.

17. (Previously Presented) The tool of claim 1 wherein the biasing member comprising a leading edge engaged with the interface member retainer engaged with a proximal end of the inner handle.

18. (Previously Presented) The tool of claim 17 wherein the leading edge of the biasing member forms an acute angle with respect to the longitudinal axis.

19. (Previously Presented) The tool of claim 17 wherein the biasing member is slidably engaged with the biasing assembly aperture.

20. (Currently Amended) The tool of claim 17 wherein the retainer is threadably engaged with a proximal end of the inner handle.

21. (Currently Amended) The tool of claim 17 wherein the location of the retainer relative to a proximal end of the inner handle is adjustable.

22. (Original) The tool of claim 1 wherein the inner surface of the outer handle comprises a plurality of detents.

23. (Original) The tool of claim 1 wherein the inner surface of the outer handle comprises a curvilinear surface.

24. (Original) The tool of claim 1 wherein the inner surface of the outer handle comprises a generally smooth surface.

25. (Original) The tool of claim 1 wherein the inner surface of the outer handle comprises an asymmetrical structure.

26. (Original) The tool of claim 1 wherein the outer handle substantially surrounds the inner handle.

27. (Original) The tool of claim 1 wherein the interface member is displaced radially inward when a torque applied to the tool coupling portion exceeds a threshold value.

28. (Original) The tool of claim 1 wherein the inner handle rotates within the outer handle when a torque applied to the tool coupling portion exceeds a threshold value.

29. (Original) The tool of claim 28 wherein the rotation of the inner handle relative to the outer handle is bi-directional.

30. (Original) The tool of claim 1 wherein a torque applied to the inner handle in a first direction that exceeds a threshold value causes the inner handle to rotate in the first direction within the outer handle, and a torque applied to the inner handle in a second direction that exceeds the threshold value does not substantially rotate the inner handle within the outer handle.

31. (Original) The tool of claim 1 comprising:

an elongated outer handle having a primary opening to a central aperture adapted to receive the inner handle; and

a cap adapted to retain the inner handle in the outer handle.

32. (Currently Amended) The tool of claim 1 wherein one or more of the inner handle, the outer handle and the interface members comprises metal, ceramic, ~~polymeric materials,~~ a composite, or a combination thereof.

33. (Canceled)

34. (Previously presented) The tool of claim 1 wherein the biasing assembly aperture is located in the inner handle.

35. (Currently Amended) A torque limiting tool comprising:

an inner handle comprising a tool coupling means and at least one radially oriented slot;

at least one interface means located in the radially oriented slot, the interface means comprising an elongated surface generally oriented along a longitudinal axis of the inner handle;

a coil spring compressively interposed between a retainer and a biasing member in a biasing assembly aperture and oriented along the longitudinal axis to provide a longitudinal biasing force that biases the interface means radially outward; and

an outer handle oriented along the longitudinal axis having an outer surface adapted to be gripped by a user and an inner surface limiting radial displacement of the interface means, the elongated surface on the interface means in direct contact with ~~and~~ the inner surface of the outer handle comprising an elongated surface area of engagement at least about 0.5 inches long and generally oriented along the longitudinal axis of the inner handle,

one or more of the inner handle, the outer handle and the interface means comprising a polymeric material ~~A torque limiting tool comprising:~~

~~an inner handle comprising a tool coupling portion and at least one radially oriented slot;~~

~~at least one interface member located in the radially oriented slot, the interface member comprising an elongated surface generally oriented along a longitudinal axis of the inner handle;~~

~~a biasing means located in a biasing assembly aperture for providing a longitudinal biasing force to bias the interface member radially outward; and~~

~~an outer handle having an inner surface limiting radial displacement of the interface member, the elongated surface on the interface member and the inner surface of the outer handle comprising an elongated surface area of engagement at least about 0.5 inches long and generally oriented along the longitudinal axis of the inner handle, one or more of the inner handle, the outer handle and the interface member comprising a polymeric material.~~

36. (Canceled)

37. (Currently Amended) A method of limiting torque transmission comprising the steps of:

generating a longitudinal biasing force along a longitudinal axis of an inner handle;

positioning a coil spring compressively between a retainer and a biasing member in a biasing assembly aperture, the coil spring oriented along the longitudinal axis to provide a longitudinal biasing force;

coupling the longitudinal biasing force to one or more interface members, the longitudinal biasing force biasing a longitudinally oriented elongated surface on the one or more interface members radially outward;

positioning at least a portion of the inner handle in an outer handle, the outer handle having an outer gripping surface oriented along the longitudinal axis adapted to be gripped by a user;

restraining the radial movement of the one or more interface members in the ~~an~~ outer handle ~~surrounding at least a portion of the inner handle~~ such that the elongated surface on the one or more interface members is in direct contact with ~~and~~ the inner surface of the outer handle comprising an elongated surface area of engagement at least about 0.5 inches long and generally oriented along the longitudinal axis of the inner handle, one or more of the inner handle, the outer handle and the one or more interface members comprising a polymeric material; and

permitting the inner handle to rotate relative to the outer handle when a torque applied to the inner handle exceeds a threshold level.

38. (Original) The method of claim 37 comprising coupling one of a plurality of tools to the inner handle.

39. (Original) The method of claim 37 comprising adjusting the longitudinal biasing force.

40. (Original) The method of claim 37 comprising displacing the elongated surface above an outer surface of the inner handle.

41. (Currently amended) The method of claim 37 comprising displacing the one or more interface members radially inward when a torque applied to the inner handle exceeds a threshold value.

42. (Canceled)

43. (Original) The method of claim 42 wherein the rotation of the inner handle relative to the outer handle is bi-directional.

44. (Original) The method of claim 37 comprising the steps of:

applying a torque to the inner handle in a first direction that exceeds a threshold value so that the inner handle rotates within the outer handle in the first direction; and

applying a torque to the inner handle in a second direction that exceeds the threshold value without permitting the inner handle to substantially rotate in the second direction within the outer handle.

45. (Original) The method of claim 37 comprising the step of:

removing a spring that provides the longitudinal biasing force from the inner handle; and

inserting a different spring having a different spring constant into the inner handle.